

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

propagating a downstream signal on an optical signal conductor from an upstream combiner to a downstream combiner, wherein the downstream signal includes an analog video broadcast signal;

counter-propagating an upstream signal on the optical signal conductor from the downstream combiner to the upstream combiner, wherein the upstream signal includes a digital signal;

propagating another downstream signal on another optical signal conductor from another upstream combiner to another downstream combiner, wherein the another downstream signal includes a digital signal; and

counter-propagating another upstream signal on the another optical signal conductor from the another downstream combiner to the another upstream combiner, wherein the another upstream signal includes an analog return signal;

broadcasting at least a portion of the downstream signal to a plurality of users and conveying a signal from at least one of the plurality of users to an input port of the another downstream combiner as the another upstream signal; and

distributing at least a portion of the another downstream signal to a plurality of users and conveying a signal from at least one of the plurality of users to an input port of the downstream combiner as the upstream signal.

13-18 (Cancelled)

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the digital signal includes a packet switched signal.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein the packet switched signal includes a cell-switched signal.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein the cell-switched signal includes an asynchronous transfer mode digital data signal.

22. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein the packet switched signal includes a frame switched signal.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the cell-switched signal includes a synchronous transfer mode digital data signal.

24. (Original) The method of claim 19, further comprising wavelength demultiplexing the upstream signal after propagating the upstream signal on the optical signal conductor from the downstream combiner to the upstream combiner.

25. (Original) The method of claim 19, further comprising adding data from a customer premises to the upstream signal before propagating the upstream signal on the optical signal conductor from the downstream combiner to the upstream combiner.

26-33 (Cancelled)

34. (Amended) The method of claim ~~28~~ 19, further comprising dropping data to a customer premises from the another downstream signal after propagating the another downstream signal on the another optical signal conductor from the second upstream combiner to the another downstream combiner.

35-43. (Cancelled)

44. (Previously presented) A process of operating a cable access television network comprising the method of claim 12.

45-53. (Cancelled)

54. (Currently Amended) An apparatus, comprising:

an upstream combiner including an upstream bi-directional common port;
an optical signal conductor coupled to the upstream bi-directional common port of the upstream combiner;
a downstream combiner including a downstream bi-directional common port coupled to the optical signal conductor, wherein the downstream combiner directs an analog video optical carrier to a bandpass input-output port that is connected by an optical fiber to an analog broadcast receiver;
another upstream combiner including another upstream bi-directional common port;
another optical signal conductor coupled to the another upstream bi-directional common port of the another upstream combiner;
another downstream combiner including another downstream bi-directional common port coupled to the another optical signal conductor, wherein an optical output of an analog return transmitter is connected by a separate optical transmission fiber to an input-output port of the another downstream combiner, which passes the analog return optical signal to the common port and then onto the another optical signal conductor;
a drop device coupled to a downstream output port of the downstream combiner;
a customer premises equipment including a customer premises equipment digital receiver input and a customer premises equipment digital receiver output, wherein the a customer premises equipment digital receiver input is coupled to the drop device, the customer premises equipment digital receiver input including an input optical connector; and
an add device coupled to a downstream input port of the another downstream combiner; ~~and—wherein~~ a customer premises equipment digital receiver output is coupled to the add device, the customer premises equipment digital receiver output including an output optical connector, and
wherein the input optical connector and the output optical connector define physically different, non-interchangeable form factors.

55. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising an upstream input optical isolator coupled to an upstream input port of the another upstream combiner and an upstream output optical isolator coupled to an upstream output port of the another upstream combiner.

56. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising a downstream input optical isolator coupled to a downstream input port of the another downstream combiner and a

downstream output optical isolator coupled to a downstream output port of the another downstream combiner.

57. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising a wavelength division multiplexer coupled to an upstream input port of the another upstream combiner.

58. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising a wavelength division demultiplexer coupled to an upstream output port of the another upstream combiner.

59. (Cancelled)

60. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising an optical isolator coupled to the drop device.

61. (Cancelled)

62. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising an optical isolator coupled to the add device.

63-65. (Canceled)

66. (Previously presented) A cable access television network, comprising the apparatus of claim 54.